

community



information and resources against
war and racism

action notes

June 17, 2002, Issue 9

Resources.....

HALAL MEALS ON WHEELS

Muslim Welfare Centre is proud to announce that we have restarted our service to help the needy and homeless people in Metro Toronto Area by distributing Lunch bags on every Saturday.

Please help us to serve the needy irrespective of Religion, Nationality, Caste or Creed.
To send your donation or feed the needy and homeless people on your behalf contact:

Muslim Welfare Centre
Tel. (416) 754-8116, 100 McLevin Ave. Suite # 4A,
Scarborough, ON M1B 2V5

(CASSA) HATE CRIME HOTLINE

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians

Have you been assaulted or threatened because you are of South Asian origin? Report it:

- Call (416) 979 8611
- 911 Emergency
- Metro Toronto Police (416) 808 2222 (non emergency)

Community Action Notes is a Toronto-based newsletter for community networking, outreach and information sharing against war and racism.

Are you a group or individual with events, meetings demo information to share? Send it our way! We gladly welcome longer analysis as well. If you have feedback, or to get involved with planning or distribution send an e-mail to:

heads up@tao.ca

**Or phone us at our new number:
(416) 760 3483**

CAN is brought to you by: the **heads up collective**,
a local sister group to **Colours of Resistance**.
download CAN @ <http://www.tao.ca/~colours/can.html>

Events.....

The Council of Agencies Serving South Asians invites you to their Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 27, 6-8 pm
Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Toronto, Rm # 309
(St. Andrews Subway Station)

Including:

The launch of CASSA Youth Initiative, Bhangra performance & Inspirational Youth Speakers and the first viewing of Youth Training Video on Hate Crime "It's About Time..." a project of CASSA



Key points about the new (& not so protective) Immigrant and Refugee Protection Act: Bill C-11

Coming into effect retroactively on June 28th.

Some very important decisions have yet to be made. Denis Coderre (Minister of Immigration) says that the appeals and legal aid process will not be officially regulated until a year from now. We should continue to resist this bill and not give up hope now that the act is coming into effect.

❖ Refugee protection is supposed to be about protecting refugees who are fleeing persecution. but under the new regulations refugees applying to resettle in Canada need to prove not only that they need protection but also that they can successfully establish themselves in Canada. This particularly discriminates against women since they have fewer opportunities for education and work experience. This is especially a problem because there is no official process for appeals at the

C-11 update...continued from first page

moment. Refugee claimants are only entitled to be heard by a single IRB member. In some cases, the IRB will appoint 3 member panels. The Act says refugee claimants can appeal a negative decision to a new Refugee Appeal Division, but the government has announced that it will not implement these sections of the Act, at least for the time being.

Legal aid coverage for refugee claims varies from province to province, but in many parts of the country it is either minimal or nonexistent. This means that many refugee claimants must present their case for refugee status with poor legal representation, or none at all.

The new act extends the already broad powers of immigration officials to detain people at their discretion. Of particular concern is the detention of minors, which is becoming increasingly common throughout Canada. This year, the highest number of minors in detention was found on 11 April (23 minors) up from the lowest number of 3 on 17 January.



The new regulations prohibit private sponsorship of refugees for people in receipt of social assistance, therefore denying people their basic right to family unity on the basis of their economic class.

The new act denies a refugee hearing to any claimant who is considered a security risk. 'Risk' is very poorly defined, allowing for complete abuse and discriminatory interpretation.

Once in a lifetime rule for refugee claims. Refugees are only allowed to make one claim and one claim only, despite changes that occur in their lives. The first time around, the claimant may have had no legal representation; the second claim may be made on an entirely different basis (sexual abuse, domestic violence, persecution based on sexual orientation, etc...)

If caught with false documents or if you aid in bringing someone to Canada using false documents (which many people need to do when fleeing persecu-

tion), or if you smuggle someone into the country, this leads to conviction and/or punishment/penalties - for example, losing permanent residency without a hearing.

The act is more about who can't come to Canada and how they will be removed than it is about opening our borders and making this country accessible and safe to refugees and immigrants.

This bill is very linked to the framework legislation C-36, which legalizes a form of systemic racism, racial profiling, allows civil rights and individuals to be vio-

NO ONE IS ILLEGAL!

A March of 1000 Flags of Resistance

- * In opposition to war, racism, imperialism and genocide
- * In solidarity with self-determination struggles and indigenous sovereignty
- * In defense of immigrant and native rights

During the G8 Summit
Majors Hill Park, OTTAWA
Across from the American Embassy
June 27, 2002, 1pm
takethecapital@tao.ca, 613-788-3310
www.takethecapital.net

A heads up on the "safe third country" provision to be announced at the G8 summit in Kananaskis, Alberta this June 26 & 27

We are very concerned about a "safe third country" agreement likely to be signed soon between Canada and the United States (US), which would lead to the US being named as a safe third country for asylum-seekers. This would allow Canada to turn back most asylum-seekers coming to Canada via the US.

Amnesty International and other human rights and refugee organizations, as well as the UNHCR, have documented that US asylum practices fail to adhere to international law, respect internationally agreed-upon procedures used in determining refugee status, and appropriately apply the Convention Refugee Definition.

The Canadian Council for Refugees is inviting people to name this U.S.-

Canada accord as the "None is too Many" agreement describing how Canadians closed its doors to Jewish refugees who were fleeing the holocaust. The title is attributed to a high level official who was asked what the quota for Jews should be. He answered that "none is too many".

We need to especially pay attention and resist this and the new legislations that the Canadian government has and is introducing that close our borders to nations with whom the US and Canada consider themselves to be at war (eg. Colombia and Afghanistan) or where we fear an influx of refugees due to America's direct tampering and Canada's either direct or complicit involvement in these areas (Pakistan, where several hundred Catholic youth

were refused into the country for Toronto's World Youth Day this July.) The policies are racist, self-serving and play into the militaristic and colonial sensibilities of the US and Canada.

Sources: Amnesty International and the Canadian Council for Refugees.
(...more on the Safe Third Country Provision in the next issue of CAN)

resources...

While G8 leaders meet to open the borders to trade, they are restricting rights and movement while displacing people. The following are some international websites working on immigration and free circulation

www.drumnation.org	(New York, US)
www.noborder.org	(Europe)
www.antimedia.net/xborder	(Australia)
www.sindominio.net/ninguna	(Spain)
www.opentheborders.org	(Canada)

**NO
HUMAN
IS
ILLEGAL!**

For over a decade, the Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) has been seeking redress for the Head Tax and Exclusion Act...

Canada. From 1885 to 1923, all and only Chinese who came to Canada had to pay a head tax. And when this racist measure did not stop Chinese immigrants from coming, the Canadian Government enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1923 to bar all but a selected few Chinese from coming in. Before the Exclusion Act was repealed in 1947, fewer than 50 Chinese were allowed to come in for over 24 years. These two pieces of legislation resulted in grave economic hardship and family separation for Chinese immigrants in Canada. It also resulted in long lasting impact on the community as a whole. For over a decade, the Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) has been seeking redress for the Head Tax and Exclusion Act issue to no avail. In December 2000, a law suit was filed by three plaintiffs representing a head tax payor, a widow and a first generation descendent of a head tax payor. In response to our law suit, the Government brought a motion to dismiss their statement of claim. In July, Judge Peter Cumming of the Ontario Superior Court granted the Government's motion, and the plaintiffs then filed an appeal to the Ontario Court of Appeal. The hearing next Monday and Tuesday is the hearing of this appeal....

Avvy Go, Clinic Director, Metro Toronto Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic co-counsel for the plaintiffs

(look for updates on this case in the next CAN)

On June 10 and 11, the Ontario Court of Appeal will hear the appeal from three individuals representing the Chinese Canadians and their families who were forced to pay the racist \$500.00 head tax when they entered

Walk to End Racism, Repression and War

A Social Justice Walk from Hamilton to Toronto, July 20-25

REASON FOR THE WALK

Long after public attention has shifted from the spike in racist attacks directed against people of colour in Canada and around the globe following September 11, 2001, harassment of Canadians of Arabic or Middle Eastern background and members of Canada's 600,000-strong Muslim community continues at the hands of the RCMP, CSIS and local police forces. In addition, Sikhs, Hindus, and other "visible minorities" continue to be the targets of daily racism, whether verbal, psychological, or physical, a social disease which continues to thrive on the silence of the great majority of white Canadians.

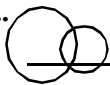
A walk from Hamilton to Toronto is a very public expression of resistance to racism and the repression and war which spring from the idea that some of us are good and others are evil based on the colour of our skin or the faith we adhere to.

The walk is also an opportunity to highlight some of the worst cases of injustice currently in Ontario, in which basic human rights are being denied a number of individuals (unfortunately, the government will not even tell us the exact numbers facing such injustices).

The walk is also a public means of putting police and state "security" agencies which prefer to operate in secrecy on notice that we are monitoring their behaviour. The walk is also an opportunity to raise funds, walk-a-thon style, for the families of the unjustly incarcerated.

For more information, a list of the demands, or to get involved, contact (416) 651-5800 or tasc@web.ca

The Anti-Racism Media Education collective invites you to...



Summer Films 2002

Come watch these films with us.

Wednesday June 19

BABAKIURIA (30 min, 1986)

& WELCOME TO AFRICVILLE (15 min, 1999)

Thursday July 18

SHEPHERD'S PIE AND SUSHI (45 min, 1996) & ERASED (15 min, 1999)

August 19: SPEAKERS FOR THE DEAD (48 min, 2000) & T.B.A.

All films will be screened at the University of Toronto Audiovisual Library in Robarts, 130 st. George St., Room 2, 3rd floor, 6PM & discussion to follow. For more info, please contact: 416-978-7770, fax: 416-971-2292, armed@canada.com <http://opirg.sa.utoronto.ca/armed/>



Breaking the Silence: Unheard Voices From the Holy Land

Saturday June 22 12:00-8:30 pm Sidney Smith 100 St. George Street (University of Toronto)

PANEL: the speakers will tell you about their personal experience in Palestine

DOCUMENTARIES: Watch intriguing documentaries about Palestinians in the occupied territories

SKITS: experience life in Palestine through skits that are reenactments of events experienced daily by Palestinians

ART AND WRITING: Come and enjoy their art and writings. This section will include a live poetry reading session.

CULTURE SHOW: Take a look at the ethnic food, clothes and symbols that are an inherit part of the Palestinian culture.

For more detailed information please contact: twinkledome@yahoo.com or call 416-935-0161 or 416-738-3385

Events

An Evening with Mai Masri

Creative Response is pleased to present an evening with Palestinian-American filmmaker Mai Masri.

Masri's award-winning film, *Frontiers of Dreams and Fears* (2001), will be followed by an interview and question period. Proceeds will go to the university scholarship fund set up by Mai Masri for thirty young Palestinian students from Shatila and Dheisha refugee camps.

Date: June 27, 2002

Time: TBA on our website at <http://creativeresponseteam.net>

Place: Innis College Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave. (at St. George, one block south of St. George Subway)

Suggested donation: \$12 and up, unwaged pay what you can

The Creative Response brings together artists, writers, educators and cultural workers to initiate artistic interventions to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to create a public space for meaningful dialogue towards a just peace in Israel/Palestine.

IMAGINE the SOUND of PEACE

Palestinian & Jewish artists come together for A concert at the Heart of the Matter

Thursday, June 20 at 8pm at The Great Hall, 1087 Queen St. West (at Dovercourt)

This event is FREE on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tickets are limited to three per person and will be available at the door from 6:30pm the night of the event, or in advance at Wonderworks, 79A Harbord Street (just west of Spadina Avenue).

Cross-cultural Peer Mediation 8 Week Training Program

FREE COURSE FOR YOUTH AGED 16-24

We are looking for a diverse group of newcomer and non-newcomer youth to participate in an eight-week intensive cross-cultural peer mediation-train the trainer program this summer.

Space is limited, preregistration required!

Benefits to taking the course:

- Acquire mediation and communication skills
- Improve your leadership and public speaking skills
- Certificate awarded upon completion
- Reference from the Mediation Facilitator
- \$50 honorarium for successfully completing the full course and the follow up

The program dates are as follows:

Every Tuesday during the summer from 4-6pm, starting July the 2nd and ending August the 27th

Interested youth should be willing to help start a peer mediation program in their school, shelters or community centres. This would require some additional hours once the training is completed. The training is just the beginning stages of the program, the aim is to ultimately create a sustainable Cross-cultural mediation team that would offer services to youth in the City - for a cost. Continued follow-up WILL be required of the youth. If you know of any youth within your community that are leaders (or not) and who would benefit from this program please contact Claire at CultureLink to sign up.

CultureLink 416-588-6288
cnaranjo@culturelink.net

CultureLink is a not-for-profit community organization, which supports the settlement and integration of newcomers to the Toronto area.

This information focuses only on Bill C-11's effects on refugees. Check out www.web.net/~ccr for more.

The Toronto Women's Bookstore proudly presents:

WOMEN AND THE POLITICS OF MILITARY CONFRONTATION:

Palestinian and Israeli Gendered Narratives of Dislocation

Edited by Nahla Abdo and Ronit Lentin

Location: sPaHa, 66 Harbord St.

Thursday, June 27, 6:30pm. Free event!

As the crisis in Israel does not show any signs of abating, this remarkable collection, edited by an Israeli and a Palestinian scholar and with contributions by Palestinian and Israeli women, offers a vivid and harrowing picture of the conflict and of its impact on daily life, especially as it affects women's experiences that differ significantly from those of men.

This event is cosponsored by Jewish Women's Committee to End the Occupation, Jewish Youth Against the Occupation, Al-Awda-Canada, Women Against the Occupation - Ottawa, Women Against the Occupation - Toronto, Coalition for a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine. For more info: (416) 922-8744

CAN CIVIL RIGHTS SURVIVE THE "ANTI-TERRORISM" LAWS?



Sunday, June 23, 9:30am to 6 pm
Medical Sciences Auditorium,
1 King's College Circle, University of Toronto (NW of Queens Park station)

Lawyers Against the War
Science for Peace
(416)978-8741 Free Admittance!

lated merely on the basis of suspicion and enables further discrimination against immigrants and refugees. Because there is no clear definition of terrorism, this leads to abuses of the act, including against people who are in legitimate struggles for human rights.

The act clearly targets peoples from racial, ethnic and religious minorities, primarily affecting Muslims, people from the Middle East, and those who 'look like them'.